

TIMELINE
SEASIDE JEWISH COMMUNITY

- 1997 January – An article in the *Cape Gazette* features a new resident of Rehoboth Beach who wonders if there are others in the area interested in establishing/reestablishing ties with their Jewish heritage. He has no specific agenda but would like his 12-year-old daughter to become more familiar with her father's heritage. He offers his phone number and place of business (Pierre's Pantry) for whoever wants to get together and talk.
- 1997 February and March – People beginning expressing their interest and a list is started. A survey is sent out with a questionnaire and a request to see who might be interested in a Passover Seder.
- 1997 April – approximately 50 people gather together for a Seder to celebrate each of the first two nights of Passover at Pierre's Pantry. So many people sign up that two different Seders were held to accommodate everyone. Thereafter, people come together in a private home to celebrate a Shabbat Service and Kiddush.
- 1997 June – A newsletter is published.
- 1997 July—Participants gather in a private home and formally establish Seaside Jewish Community. A Board of Directors is elected and dues are collected. Thereafter, meetings continued to be held in private homes.
- 1997 December --A Chanukah party is held at All Saints Episcopal Church in Rehoboth.
- 1998 A “loaner Torah” is received.

- 1999 All Saint's Church offers its Parish Hall as a meeting space. Later, Bethel United Methodist Church in Lewes and the School of Environmental Science at the University of Delaware provide room for services.
- 2000 By-laws for the new community are adopted. The congregation decides to remain unaffiliated with any particular denomination of Judaism. It defines itself as egalitarian and inclusive embracing all levels of observance and promoting a sense of extended family among its members. There is no paid staff.
- 2001 Seaside holds its first Bar Mitzvah.
- 2001 Ocean Wave Lodge of the Odd Fellows agrees to let the congregation use its building on Holland Glade Road. High Holy Days Services are held there. In later years, the community grows so much that High Holy Day services are moved to the larger facility at Epworth United Methodist Church.
- 2006 The Community purchases the Odd Fellows building. The Community continues to grow.
- 2009 Early on, religious services are member-led or feature guest rabbis. Beth Cohen is hired as the part-time religious leader. She becomes an ordained rabbi in 2016 and serves the congregation until July 2018. At that time, Rabbinic Pastor/Cantor Lisa Levine becomes the part-time religious leader. Rabbi Cohen remains as Rabbi Emeritus.
- 2019 Seaside Jewish Community grows from its original group to a congregation of 600 members. It offers an extensive program of worship services, educational programs and social activities.

- 2020 Groundbreaking ceremony is held for the expansion of the synagogue. The expansion will double the size of the sanctuary, classrooms and social areas; improve accessibility; update the kitchen; and add new security, video and communications systems. During the renovations, congregational activities will be hosted by Epworth United Methodist Church, the Lewes Library and Saint Peter's Episcopal Church in Lewes.
- 2020 Seaside hires Rabbi Kevin Bernstein as the interim religious leader as a search for a full-time religious leader begins. Zoom worship services are initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic. All worship services, adult education and other events are held remotely, including streaming High Holy Day services for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in September. Seaside continues to participate in interfaith social initiatives, such as the Epworth Soup Kitchen and Good Samaritan Pantry.
- 2021 Seaside's building renovation and expansion is completed, including upgraded audio-visual equipment for worship services and meetings by Zoom or streaming. Seaside develops plan for returning to in-person services and events if safe and permissible later in the year.
- 2022 Rabbi Julie Hilton Danan, Ph.D, begins her tenure as Seaside's first, full-time rabbi.